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Sustainable Tourism Program

What Is Sustainable Tourism?



Sustainable tourism, in simple terms, is tourism that does not deplete economic, social/cultural and environmental resources. The ultimate goal is to provide high-quality experiences for visitors, strengthen host communities and cultures, and develop tourism-related livelihoods while preserving the surrounding environments.

Contents



Addressing Sustainable Tourism	4
About the Handbook	5
The First Step – Decide to be Sustainable	6
The Big Picture – Sustainable Management.....	6
Economic Sustainability.....	9
Nature of the Issue	9
Guidelines for Tourism Businesses.....	10
Social/Cultural Sustainability	11
Nature of the Issue	11
Guidelines for Tourism Businesses.....	12
Environmental Sustainability	15
Nature of the Issue	15
Guidelines for Tourism Businesses.....	16
Motivating Tourists to Embrace Sustainability During Travel	23
Business Checklist for Adopting Sustainable Tourism Principles and Practices	24
First Steps	24
Economic.....	24
Social/Cultural	25
Environmental	25
Sources for Further Information	26

Addressing Sustainable Tourism

Over the past two decades, sustainability has become a focal point for tourism development around the world. Reflecting this trend, in 1999 the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) created a Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. More recently, in 2008 the Rainforest Alliance, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Foundation and the UNWTO initiated the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC Partnership), a coalition of 32 organizations working to increase understanding of sustainable tourism practices and principles. Sustainable tourism is widely considered to be the fastest growing segment of the world's largest industry.



“Sustainability is now becoming a mandatory business requirement. The sustainability movement is being driven and shaped by forces outside of the tourism industry’s control – among them sharply rising energy costs, increased regulatory pressures, and growing consumer demand.”

(Deloitte 2009 Tourism Industry Outlook)

California, an innovator in many areas, has also taken a leading role in raising awareness about sustainability and taking action to address the surrounding issues. An example is the 2006 California Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill 32). This legislation has positioned California as a leader in green innovation, resulted in green investment and jobs, and helped to brand the state as a sustainable destination.

As the most visited state in the union, and home to two of the nation’s 10 most visited cities, tourism is one of California’s largest and most prosperous industries. California’s unique and diverse environmental and social/cultural resources are major tourism attractions. As such, they are also vulnerable to the impacts of tourism. In order to protect the resources that support tourism, and to capitalize on the growing global market for sustainable consumer goods and services, the Californian tourism industry and its suppliers need to take cohesive steps toward sustainable tourism management.

About the Handbook

This handbook is designed to be a straightforward first introduction to sustainable tourism with a view to raising awareness of sustainable tourism principles and practices, and encouraging their implementation. The best, most comprehensive, and most recent Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria have been adapted to reflect California's tourism industry.

This handbook firstly provides the “big picture” context of sustainable tourism management. This is followed by an exploration of the “three pillars” of sustainability: economic, social/cultural and environmental sustainability. For each pillar, the handbook covers:

- The Nature of the Issue
- Guidelines for Tourism Businesses (sustainability recommendations)
- Making it Happen (Examples of best practice in California)

This handbook concludes by recommending ways to motivate and encourage tourists to travel sustainably, by providing a simple checklist for businesses looking to adopt sustainable tourism principles and practices, and by providing a list of sources for further information.

Given the broad range of businesses involved in delivering the tourism experience, recommendations may not directly apply to all sectors of the tourism industry. Indeed, recommendations are purposefully non sector-specific with a view to being as inclusive as possible.



The First Step – Decide to be Sustainable

The first step to becoming a sustainable tourism business is making the decision to do so. It is important to remember that sustainable tourism management is not anti-growth. Rather, a sustainable approach recognizes the realities of resource limitations and helps you to work creatively within these boundaries for the long-term success of your business and the conservation of the social/cultural and natural environments in which you operate.

“80% of CEOs of 900 global corporations believe sustainability is or soon will be vital to their profitability. 71% would sacrifice short term gains to move their company towards sustainability” (Savitz & Webster, 2006)

The Big Picture – Sustainable Management

Once you have taken the first step and decided to commit to sustainable tourism, begin with the big picture and establish an overarching mission statement to incorporate sustainable management systems in your business. Be aspirational, but be sure that the mission is realistic and practical for your specific tourism operations. Embrace sustainability as a part of your corporate social responsibility and communicate your commitment to your staff, suppliers, customers and local community. From the conceptual beginnings of your tourism business to everyday operations, you should always try to embrace sustainable practices.

The following sections are designed to show how you might implement these strategies in a way that reflects the three pillars of sustainability.





Making it Happen

Cities and counties embracing the big picture of sustainability

San Francisco:

- Rated in the top 10 green cities in the U.S. by National Geographic's *The Green Guide*.
- Public transit is first priority for the city, and it dedicates more than 17% of its 49 square miles to parks and open space. Additionally, there are hybrid taxis, the nation's first hybrid ferry boat (to Alcatraz Island), a ban on plastic bags, a solar-paneled convention center, a solar-paneled scoreboard at AT&T Park, and scores of environmentally aware hotels, restaurants, attractions and tours.
- The San Francisco Planning & Urban Research Association (SPUR) opened its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified green Urban Center. The center is available for events, presentations, symposia, product launches, plenary sessions and more.
- City officials in San Francisco are testing out a new program, "Pavement to Parks," to transform portions of streets into car-free pedestrian plazas. For information visit www.sfgov.org.

Santa Barbara:

- The Central Coast region's visitor's bureaus and Simple Shoes (a Santa Barbara-based brand) provide visitors with information on self-guided tours and all things green, including architecture, art, transportation, sustainable agriculture, biodynamically grown wines, recycling, nature preserves and ecotourism activities, green hotels and tour itineraries. www.GreenSantaBarbara.com.
- The Santa Barbara Car Free Project is a cooperative partnership led by the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. Travelers arriving to Santa Barbara car-free can save up to 50% at 22 hotels and 20 activities and restaurants. www.SantaBarbaraCarFree.com.

Orange County Region:

- The Slow Food Movement promotes fresh, local ingredients in food preparation. This involves less transportation, water and pesticides, and is environmentally, animal welfare and human health friendly production. For example, Casa Laguna Inn & Spa in Laguna Beach contracts exclusively with local farmers within a 100 mile radius.
- At Huntington Beach, visitors can tour protected wetlands that are home to rare birds and an ecological sanctuary of native plants and wildlife. International travelers can also volunteer in coastal protection services for dolphins, and planting and restoration days at nature reserves.

Mendocino County:

- Mendocino has long been recognized as being eco-friendly and environmentally-orientated. 18% of Mendocino vineyards are certified organic, the highest proportion of any county in the United States – representing more than a third of all California’s certified organic vineyards. Mendocino’s Parducci Wine Cellars was the first carbon-neutral winery in the nation. Parducci uses tree-free papers and soy-based inks for its labels, while its tractors are fuelled by biodiesel. www.mendowine.com.
- Mendocino has the highest percentage of certified sustainable forest in the U.S. Tourists visit Jackson State Demonstration Forest to learn about sustainable forestry.
- MacKerricher State Park, just outside of Fort Bragg, has recently implemented the “Save Our Shorebirds” project, where visitors can learn about and contribute toward the preservation of the endangered American golden plover, black turnstone and red knot species. Additional information can be found at www.parks.ca.gov.



Economic Sustainability

Sustainable tourism supports a viable economic base.

Your economic practices have substantial impacts on your local community. A sustainable tourism business supports a viable economic base in its community, creates employment and drives local prosperity through backward linkages into all kinds of local industries and businesses that comprise and supply the tourism industry. The way you manage your business impacts the economic sustainability of California tourism.

“More than half of Americans say they would be more likely to select a travel provider that uses more environmentally friendly products and processes.”

(U.S. Travel Association, formerly Travel Industry Association, 2007)

Nature of the Issue

The key to achieving economic sustainability for tourism in California is maximizing the “economic retention” of tourist spending in your local economy. Sustainable tourism businesses need to develop strategies that are capable of meeting the long-term economic needs and aspirations of the local community. Communities that are engaged by tourism businesses as stakeholders in tourism, and economic partners in the tourism industry, will actively support local tourism businesses. If tourism is an important source of local employment and a significant buyer of local goods and services, residents are more likely to be supportive. Business operators and local communities need to work together to maximize local economic benefits.



Guidelines for Tourism Businesses

- Employ locally and equitably. Set targets to increase the number of local residents you employ.
- Include local residents in high-skilled positions such as managers, architects, researchers, skilled construction workers and others. Offer on-the-job skill training where appropriate and necessary.
- Collaborate with your community. Purchase locally and actively seek out ways to include local service providers and producers in your business. This may include the development of new tourism products. Establish the percentage of local products and services you use, and set targets to increase it.
- Encourage your local business suppliers to develop sustainable goods and services that reflect local nature, history and culture. Encourage your customers to buy them.
- Promote your sustainable practices to your customers.

Making it Happen

Utilizing local services and products

- **FarmerBrown** in San Francisco supports local and particularly African-American organic farmers, using organic, biodynamic and/or sustainably raised foods and beverages.
www.farmerbrownsf.com
 - **The Ambrose Hotel** in Santa Monica is the first hotel in the nation to receive the United States Green Building Council's LEED certification. The hotel supports neighbors and local merchants, and promotes sustainability in the local community. The property recycles, uses ecologically responsible cleaning products and cooks with organic produce.
www.ambrosehotel.com/green.shtml
 - **Urban Tavern** in San Francisco uses organic and sustainable ingredients made in-house or sourced from within 200 miles of the restaurant.
 - **Chez Panisse Café** in Berkeley uses food that is organically grown and harvested in ecologically sound ways from more than 60 local suppliers.
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Social/Cultural Sustainability

Sustainable tourism respects the vitality of social and cultural systems of destinations.

Tourism brings social and cultural impacts to destinations and influences the livelihoods of local residents. Sustainable tourism aims to minimize the negative impact of tourism on host communities while supporting their social and cultural integrity.

“As early as 2002 55.1 million American travelers demonstrated preference in their travel and consumption choices for companies that support sustainable tourism.”

(TIA and *National Geographic Traveler* 2002)

Nature of the Issue

Tourism can bring improvement in local living standards for residents. However, it can also conflict with social and cultural values. California tourism businesses need to recognize and consider the social values and cultural heritage of destination communities. A sustainable tourism business



strengthens and develops the social and cultural fabric of local communities. This may involve instilling a sense of pride in local culture and heritage, and working in conjunction with local communities to find synergies between your business and the needs of the local community. Clear and transparent communication and consultation with local communities and the participation of local communities in planning for tourism is the key.

Guidelines for Tourism Businesses

- Support social infrastructure development. Identify priority needs with community representatives. Assist in social initiatives that help improve the local quality of life, including education, health and sanitation.
- Take interest in local community projects such as local schools or sports teams that require assistance.
- Increase the skill level of the local workforce and offer opportunities for professional development.
- Build relationships with local education and training institutions. Offer roles for interns and local graduates, and provide on-the-job training where necessary.
- While respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities, use local art, architecture, or cultural heritage in operations, design, decoration and cuisine.
- Treat cultural heritage with dignity and ask your customers to follow. Develop and explain guidelines for appropriate behavior at culturally and historically sensitive sites.
- Where appropriate, contribute to the protection and conservation of local historical, archeological, cultural, and spiritually important properties and sites.
- Offer interpretation of natural and cultural environments and local cultural heritage.
- Ensure that your activities do not jeopardize the basic services of local and neighboring communities such as water, energy or sanitation.
- Provide equitable access for persons with special needs.



Making it Happen

Enrich and support the social/cultural development of your community

- **VolunTours** is a social enterprise of the nonprofit organization Los Niños, based in Chula Vista, San Diego County. It provides opportunities for travelers to directly support development through overnight and weekend trips involving activities like laying cement for classroom foundations and plazas and/or helping to pack locally produced honey.
www.voluntourism.org
 - **The Ambrose Hotel** in Santa Monica is an active supporter of local non-profits and charitable organizations. The hotel also creates opportunities for staff members to be paid volunteers for local events such as Heal the Bay coastal cleanup day and Tree People tree planting days.
 - **Fisherman's Wharf Merchants Association** in San Francisco strives to ensure the growth of its community by preserving the history and sustaining the future health and success of the fishermen and merchants. There are over 125 members in hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail stores, tour operators and service providers. The association is currently supporting The San Francisco Police Department Youth Fishing Program and The Fishermen's and Seamen's Memorial Chapel Fund.
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Making it Happen

Provide services and support events to increase community awareness of sustainability

- **The Discovery Science Center** in Santa Ana educates children about sustainability with 100 interactive exhibits.
 - **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary** takes the opportunity to educate visitors about environmentally friendly tourism aboard cruises.
 - **Pacific Life Tours** provides trips that educate passengers on Monterey Bay's kelp forest ecosystem, adaptations for animals living in the ocean and human effects on the sea.
 - **Roseville Utility Exploration Center** in the Gold Country Region offers high-tech, hands-on exhibits on a variety of topics ranging from electricity and water conservation to reducing solid waste and storm water pollution. Technology workshops offer classes in photovoltaic energy, xeriscaping (landscaping to minimize water use), building with recycled products and other practical topics.
 - **The Stanford Inn** in Mendocino reduces environmental impacts for the community by helping to protect Big River from environmental degradation, banning the use of herbicides and pesticides, composting, using bio-diesel powered trucks, and sponsoring community events. In addition, the Inn is an advocate for the social equity of its staff in an expensive region.
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- **Sierra-at-Tahoe Ski Resort** holds an annual Push, Pull or Pedal EcoParade for travelers moving via their own power through the village at the base of Squaw Valley such as wagons and bikes made from recycled materials.

- **Santa Margarita de Cortona Asistencia** holds its annual Earth Day Food and Wine Festival, featuring an array of cuisine from locally sourced ingredients and sustainable wines while promoting a “zero waste” event.



- **Solar Living Institute** in Hopland offer all kinds of classes to the community, from making your home solar to how to retrofit your car to run on bio-fuels to workshops on energy-efficient building and organic gardening. They also produce an annual SolFest celebration in August. www.solarliving.org
- **Loews Coronado Bay Resort** helps preserve and maintain the Silver Strand State Beach with California State Parks and the California State Parks Foundation. Guests can take part in the resort’s Volunteer Vacation package stay overnight, tour Silver Strand with a State Park Environmental Educator and participate in a hands-on restoration project or coastal beach clean-up, with the overall goal of learning more about preserving and protecting natural resources and giving back to the local environment. The company has explicit, publicly accessible policies on multicultural initiatives, a good neighbor policy and a green policy. For example, Loews addresses issues of social concern by:
 - Donating excess food to local food banks, shelters and hunger relief programs.
 - Supporting local literacy programs by providing space for classes to be held and volunteer instructors from the hotels.
 - Extensive recycling programs including office paper, newspapers, aluminum, plastic and the purchase of recycled products when possible.
 - Donating used goods such as linens and furniture to local organizations and shelters.
 - Encouraging volunteer activities for hotel employees.
 - Implementing energy saving equipment in new hotels and in existing properties as they are renovated.www.loewshotels.com
- **Hornblower Cruises & Events** based in San Diego is increasing its initiatives to reduce environmental impact and educate the public. Guests learn about the company’s eco-outreach through video clips and on-board displays, and other local businesses making sustainability a priority. The company also participates in an EPA-funded Port of San Diego study of copper-free paints that aims to minimize boating impact in the bay. Hornblower also serves sustainable food and beverages on its tours and private charters, choosing recyclable and biodegradable service items, and bio-fuels whenever possible. Hornblower has partnered with several local organizations in its sustainability including the Port of San Diego, San Diego Oceans Foundation and San Diego Natural History Museum.



Environmental Sustainability

Sustainable tourism positively contributes to the quality of its surrounding ecological and natural environments.

California's environments range from urban to rural, from beaches to ski resorts, from coastlines to deserts and mountains. All are major tourism attractions in their own right. Tourism business practices can influence the quality of surrounding environments. Failure to protect the environment will result in undermining the resources on which successful tourism businesses are based. Sustainable tourism businesses not only minimize their negative impacts, but positively contribute to conserving and enhancing the quality of the local environment.

"95% of business travelers think that lodging companies should be undertaking green initiatives. 48% try to be green when they travel."

(Deloitte 2009 Tourism Industry Outlook)

Nature of the Issue

The impact of poorly planned and managed tourism on the natural environment can be seen at degraded tourist destinations around the world. In order to protect the diverse natural beauty of California for its residents and visitors, tourism businesses need to adopt sustainable practices as part of their corporate social responsibilities.

In addition, global trends reflect a rapidly growing concern for environmental sustainability among consumers. Good environmental practice not only sustains your business, but also makes economic sense and is likely to provide a marketing advantage.

Guidelines for Tourism Businesses

Some developments are required to conduct Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act. If your tourism business does not require an EIR, or if you are looking to further improve your environmental performance, you could take some of the following general measures:

- Hire a professional consultant who can assess your environmental impact and guide you in environmental planning for your business.
- Style the architecture of your business to blend into already established local styles and surroundings. Use local and/or sustainable materials where available.
- Design the structure of your business to minimize noise and visual hazards (e.g. strong lights) that impact local residents, surrounding environments and visitors.
- Conduct an environmental audit of your business that establishes your current environmental practice and allows you to improve and monitor your performance over time.



Biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes conservation

- Develop a business mission statement and a code of conduct that clearly explains your dedication to conserving nature. Disseminate this to your staff, customers and community.
- Educate your staff, local communities and tourists on the importance of environmental sustainability and what they can do to make a positive impact on the environment. Promote your own sustainable efforts.
- Contribute and support local nature and wildlife conservation. Set targets to increase the level of your contribution to nature conservation. For example, increase the amount of funding for, or the provision of staff time to volunteer in, local biodiversity conservation programs.
- Embed a conservation levy into your product and/or service pricing. Promote to your customers how the levy supports local conservation projects and environmental sustainability.
- Use climate-appropriate native species for landscaping and restoration to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species. Native plants need less fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation, and attract native wildlife.
- Ultimately, your business practice should not produce adverse effects on local ecology and wildlife. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems should be minimized.



Making it Happen

Incorporate environmental planning in design, construction, management and maintenance

- **The Moscone Center** is a sustainable convention center that helps protect the environment. With its sustainable purchasing, green cleaning and management of toxic materials, the center minimizes environmental impact and benefits the local community. The Moscone Center was awarded the Environmental Honor by the EPA in 2009. www.moscone.com.
- **The Orchard Garden Hotel** in San Francisco was built adhering to LEED standards. In addition, the Orchard Garden uses in-room recycling systems, chemical-free cleaning products, compact fluorescent light bulbs and guestroom key card energy control systems. www.theorchardhotel.com
- **The Brower Center** in Berkeley is a four-story mixed-use office, meeting and conference centre constructed with 53% recycled materials. The center practices sustainable operations by including photovoltaic panels, 100% day lighting, collection and reuse of rainwater, solar shading devices and many other initiatives. www.browercenter.org.
- **Hotel Carlton**, a Joie de Vivre hotel, is ranked as San Francisco's greenest hotel by the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification system. The hotel has LEED Gold certification and incorporates compact fluorescent light bulbs throughout the hotel, toiletry dispensers rather than individually packed disposable containers, filtered water machines with glass pitchers instead of bottled water, carpets made from post-consumer recycled material, and only low-VOC paints and non-toxic cleaning products. Additional hotel initiatives include a green meetings program and purchase of carbon offsets for all carbon usage.
- **The Little River Golf Course** in Mendocino county is a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, which recognizes golf courses that protect the environment, conserve natural resources and provide wildlife habitats.
- **The California Academy of Sciences** in San Francisco strives to be the greenest museum in the world with its 2.5 acre Living Roof, an expansive solar canopy, an extensive water reclamation system and walls insulated with recycled blue jeans.



Resource preservation and pollution reduction

- Perform a professional energy audit of your business to get started.
- Be aware of your purchasing behavior and actively seek to minimize the use of disposable goods and unnecessary packaging. Implement a “reduce, reuse and recycle” policy. Use environmentally friendly building materials, source local produce and purchase only reusable, recyclable or recycled consumables.
- Seek ways to reduce carbon emissions related to transport. For example, motor coaches and trains are very energy efficient, while large SUVs and first-class flights use large amounts of energy. Using non-fossil fuel-powered transport such as bicycles and walking can help reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism industry. Communicate your innovations and the reasons behind them to your customers and staff.
- Consider providing an option for your customers to offset the carbon emissions associated with use of your product or service.
- Measure your energy consumption. Record your water, electricity and gas consumption for several months and set specific and realistic targets to reduce usage. Consider implementing alternative forms energy production (e.g., solar, wind turbine). There are many ways you can reduce your energy consumption and pollution.



Water

- Treat and reuse your wastewater.
- Use natural cleaning products.
- Use low flow shower heads and faucet aerators, and install low-flow or dual-flush toilets.
- Collect storm water and use it for cleaning or landscaping.
- Water your landscape in the morning, evening or non-windy days to minimize water evaporation.
- Install a rain sensor on your irrigation controller so it will not run when it is raining.
- Monitor your appliances and plumbing regularly, and service immediately when problems occur.
- Educate your staff and customers about ways to reduce water usage and the importance of these measures in the local context.



Solid waste

- Make electronic files rather than paper files where possible. If printing and photocopying is necessary, use both sides of the paper.
- Buy recycled products where possible. For example, send your toner cartridges to be recycled and buy recycled toner cartridges.
- Talk to your suppliers (e.g., produce, office equipment) to reduce packaging.
- Compost coffee grounds and food scraps, and use it as natural fertilizer.
- Have separate garbage bins for glass, plastic, paper, cans and other recyclable waste.

“Energy efficiency is the cheapest, fastest and smartest strategy available for saving money and resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions around the world.”
(United Nations Development Program, 2009)

Electricity and gas

- Source your local renewable energy suppliers. Reduce and offset your greenhouse gas emissions to minimize your impact on climate change.
- Consult professionals to help take advantage of free energy sources such as natural sun light and passive solar architectural design.
- Double-glaze your windows and close vents and doors in unused spaces. Install programmable thermostats in your offices.
- Use solar water heating. Insulate water heaters and hot water pipes. Lower thermostat temperatures by a few degrees.
- During the summer, a 5°F higher setting on your air conditioning thermostat will save about 10% on cooling costs.
- During the winter, lowering the temperature 3-5°F can save up to 20% on heating costs.
- Reduce air conditioning costs by using fans, keeping windows and doors shut and closing shades during the day.
- Remind your staff and customers to turn off lights and equipment when not in use. A simple notice next to switches can be effective.
- Use laptop computers where possible, as they use up to 80% less energy than standard desktops.



“When done correctly, tourism investment can create local jobs, conserve natural resources and infuse long-term wealth.”

(United Nations Foundation, 2009)

- Use task lighting instead of overhead lighting where possible. Use compact fluorescent lights that last 10 times longer and use 80% less energy than normal bulbs. Dimmer switches and occupancy sensors can also lower energy use.
- All chemical usage in your business should be properly managed. Substitute harmful substances used in pesticides, swimming pool disinfectants, cleaning products, and others to innocuous, biodegradable products where available.
- Practice reducing pollution that your business creates. Consider the noise, light, erosion, ozone-depleting compounds, and air and soil contaminants.
- Reward staff who take public transportation or carpool to work.
- Ask staff for their opinions on ways to save energy and reduce pollution.

Making it Happen

Adopt energy efficient systems

- **Universal Studios Hollywood** is the first theme park awarded with the Environmental Media Association’s Green Seal Award for its energy-efficient Simpsons Ride, with the largest installation of LED lamps in the history of theme parks.
- **Yosemite National Park** has the first U.S. fleet of all-hybrid buses, 18 new buses designated for use in Yosemite’s free shuttle service by three million travelers annually.
- **Glen Ivy Hot Springs Resort** in Corona uses low-flow faucets and showerheads, recycles its waste and uses green products – like unbleached paper. The resort is a member of the Green Spa Network, a group dedicated to using environmentally sustainable practices in the spa industry. www.greenspanetwork.org
- **The Mission Bay Aquatic Center** in San Diego is completely energy self-sufficient, uses solar water heating, employs water-saving high-pressure cleaning hoses and recycles all grey water that falls on the premises. www.missionbayaquaticcenter.com
- **Pacific Park** in Santa Monica has the world’s first-ever solar-powered Ferris wheel. The Pacific Wheel generates more than 71,000 kilowatt hours of renewable photovoltaic power from the sun’s rays.



Making it Happen

Practice sustainable waste management measures

- **The American Center for Food, Wine and the Arts** in Napa composts the center's restaurant and food programs waste and puts it back into their 3.5 acres of organic gardens.
 - **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway** recycles its office waste by using Shred-It, a mobile paper shredding and recycling company that has helped them save more than 40 trees by recycling their office paper and newspapers.
 - **Hotel Triton** in San Francisco adopts a broad strategy of waste and energy reduction. Triton's "eco-king premier" rooms feature green furnishings, such as an armchair woven from recycled seatbelts, a shower curtain made from hemp and walls coated with non-toxic paint.
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Motivating Tourists to Embrace Sustainability during Travel

There is no doubt that consumers around the world are becoming increasingly conscious of sustainability in their daily purchasing behavior. It is the responsibility of California tourism businesses to ensure that sustainable purchasing options are available to tourists as well. There are a number of ways to motivate tourists to travel sustainably.

- Actively promote your sustainable practices. For example, if your business is accredited with sustainable accreditation schemes, communicate them in your Web site and brochures, and to your agents, staff, guests and community.
- Encourage tourists to spend money within the local economy. Explain the support they are providing to the local community. Showcase your efforts to improve and nurture the

local economy. For example, if your business supports local community projects, or if the majority of your staff is hired locally, explain these efforts to your customers.

- Have information sheets available on how to act appropriately in the local environment. Places such as check-in points and information desks can carry pamphlets for tourists to browse on “do and don’t” behaviors when visiting local national parks.
- Commit to ongoing research to understand your customers. Leave questionnaire surveys in their rooms or information desks to ask about their opinions and commitment to sustainability issues. This will allow you to not only research for future product and services development, but also present an image of your commitment to sustainability.
- Instill conservation values in tourists. Educate them about sustainable ways of not only exploring California, but also the world. Encourage tourists to give more back to the people they meet and the places they visit to make their travels more meaningful.

Business Checklist for Adopting Sustainable Tourism Principles and Practices

First Steps

- ✓ Decide to be sustainable.
- ✓ Establish mission statement then publicize it, promote it, embrace it, act upon it at all levels of your business involving strategies for all three pillars of sustainability.

Economic

- ✓ Establish a local, equitable hiring policy; provide training where necessary.
- ✓ Seek to localize your supply chain.
- ✓ Purchase sustainable local products that reflect local nature and culture.



Social/Cultural

- ✓ Support local social infrastructure: education, health, sports and sanitation.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for professional development of local population
- ✓ Build relationships with local education and training institutions.
- ✓ Employ locally appropriate design, decoration and cuisine.
- ✓ Develop guidelines for behavior at sensitive sites.
- ✓ Contribute to conservation of important cultural sites.
- ✓ Offer interpretation of natural and cultural heritage.
- ✓ Provide equitable access for persons with special needs.



Environmental

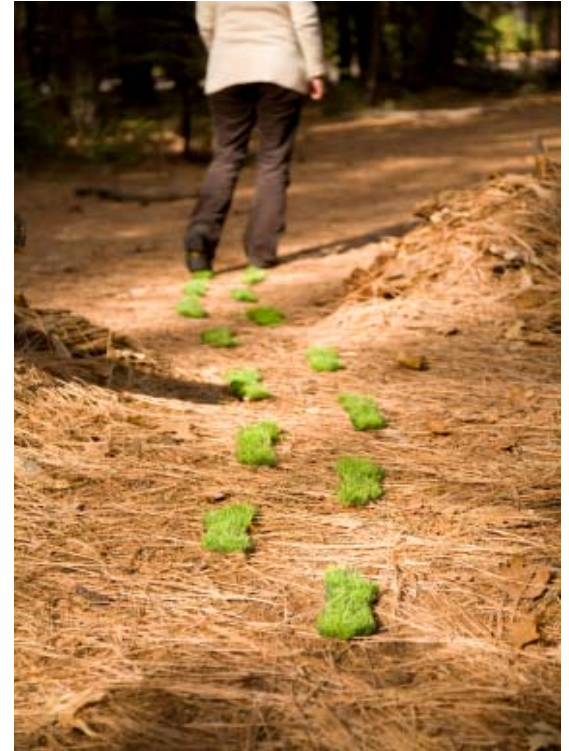
- ✓ Educate your staff, local communities and tourists about environmental sustainability.
- ✓ Contribute to and support local nature and wildlife conservation.
- ✓ Embed a conservation levy into your product and/or service pricing.
- ✓ Use climate appropriate native species for landscaping and restoration.
- ✓ Perform a professional energy audit of your business.
- ✓ Implement a “reduce, reuse and recycle” policy.
- ✓ Reduce carbon emissions related to transport.
- ✓ Consider offsetting your carbon production.
- ✓ Reduce energy and water consumption; source renewable energy.
- ✓ Reduce solid and liquid waste pollution.

Sources for Further Information

- The California Small Business Association (CSBA) is a volunteer-driven non-profit organization that supports and communicates small business owners' voices in state and federal government. The CSBA advocates issues ranging from workforce skills, health care, labor, to environmental for California business owners.

Source: <http://csba.com/home/>

- National Geographic is encouraging Northern Californian communities and individuals to participate in creating the North Coast MapGuide. Source: www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/pdf/north-california-mapguide.pdf



- The Genographic Legacy Fund by National Geographic and IBM aims to empower indigenous and traditional peoples on a local level, which includes the management of tourism.

Source: https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/genographic/lan/en/legacy_fund.html

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation partners with communities to support the Main Street Center program to revive historic or traditional areas. The Trust also supports the Heritage Tourism Program, which provides information on how heritage tourism can be beneficial for individuals or communities. Sources: www.preservationnation.org/main-street/ and www.preservationnation.org/issues/heritage-tourism/
- The Green Hotel Association provides memberships for hotels that are aware of environmental issues and desire to adopt sustainable practices. The association provides its members with information on environmentally-friendly energy and water-saving

products, ideas and techniques to reduce hotels' environmental impact. Source:

www.greenhotels.com

- The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) provides the third-party verification Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification for buildings or communities that are designed and built to “implement practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions.” Source: www.usgbc.org
- Conservation Innovation Grants in California, provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, are conducting projects such as developing farmer-friendly conservation technologies (e.g., sustainable wine-grape growing, on-farm pollinator habitat and biodiversity). Source: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig
- The California Department of General Services provides the California Green Lodging Program, which brings together the lodging industry, travelers and the environment by providing information for travelers on green lodges, green traveling tips and green resources for lodges. Source: www.travel.dgs.ca.gov/lodging/greenlodging.htm
- Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) prioritizes energy efficiency. The company develops new technologies for energy efficiency and educates customers on simplistic ways to change the environment. Company staff donates to volunteer programs for local communities, and the company takes part in managing lands and waters sustainably. Source: www.pge.com/about/environment
- Stirling Energy Systems is “a pioneer in the design and development of Concentrated Solar Power solutions.” The company provides efficient energy solutions that are clean, cost-effective and sustainable. Source: www.stirlingenergy.com
- California Urban Water Conservation Council sustains “partnerships among urban water agencies, public interest organizations, and private entities” to increase efficient usage of water. Source: www.cuwcc.org

- The Consortium for Energy Efficiency is “a consortium of efficiency program administrators.” The EPA has awarded its Efficiency Programs for Climate Protection. Source: www.cee1.org/
- The International Ecotourism Society aspires to be the “global source of knowledge and advocacy uniting communities, conservation and sustainable travel” by providing opportunities for international networking, educating tourists and professionals and influencing the practice of sustainable travel. Source: www.ecotourism.org
- Sustainable Travel International is a non-profit organization that provides education and services to support environmental conservation, preservation of cultural heritage during travel while achieving “cross-cultural understanding and economic development.” Source: www.sustainabletravelinternational.org
- Smart From the Start is a California “water conservation program that provides user-friendly tools and landscape templates to assist new homeowners and developers design and install beautiful, water-smart landscape.” Source: www.h2ouse.net
- Flex Your Power is California's statewide energy efficiency marketing and outreach campaign. It provides best practice guidelines and energy-saving tips for international residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and agricultural energy consumers. For example, it has a guide for hotel and restaurant operators on how to boost their profits with energy efficiency and conservation measures. Source: www.fypower.org
- The Go Solar California Web site is provided by California's Public Utilities Commission and Energy Commission. This site provides a "one-stop shop" for information on rebates, tax credits and incentives for solar energy systems in California. Source: www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov
- The Union of Concerned Scientists is “the leading science-based nonprofit working for a healthy environment and a safer world. UCS combines independent scientific research and citizen action to develop innovative, practical solutions and to secure responsible

changes in government policy, corporate practices, and consumer choices.” The UCS recently produced a green travel guide with information about the carbon footprint of different types of tourist transportation. Source: www.ucsusa.org

- The Business and Organization Carbon Calculator is provided by The Climate Trust to calculate individual organizations’ carbon footprint. Source: http://www.climatetrust.org/content/calculators/Business_&_Org_Calculator.pdf
- The Green Institute for Village Empowerment provides visitors and residents with hands-on tips for going green via its educational symposiums and special events that highlight sustainable lifestyles, technologies and developmental practices. Source: www.giveforthefuture.org
- The Solar Living Institute is a 12-acre renewable energy and sustainable living demonstration site for renewable energy, alternative fuels, green building, permaculture and sustainable living technologies. Source: www.solarliving.org
- SunLine Transit Agency provides hydrogen-electric hybrid buses for environmentally conscious public transportation services and alternative fuel solutions. Source: www.sunline.org
- AC Transit dedicates its public transit services to reducing emissions and was the first transit agency to join the California Climate Action Registry. Source: www.actransit.org
- Eqocar provides hybrid rental cars for travelers to minimize their carbon footprint. Source: www.eqocar.com
- Huntington Beach promotes its ecotourism activities in its Web site for tourists who want to volunteer in conservation programs. It also presents monthly eco-news updates and eco-events. Source: <http://www.surfcityusa.com/surf-city-ecotourism/default.aspx>
- Parkvisitor.com provides information on how to travel in an environmentally sensitive manner and “is an alliance of businesses dedicated to preserving the beauty and

recreation opportunities of state parks.” Members assist in preserving public lands and recreation programs, and has gained recognition from customers for its attempts to conserve state parks. Source: <http://www.parkvisitor.com/20forparks/index.html>

- Orange County’s Anaheim provides information on Green Entertainment. Information on recycling programs, sustainable entertainment and the green standard of Disney Cast Members are included in their promotional Web site. Source: <http://www.anaheimoc.org/Articles/Archive/Webpage101192.asp>
- The Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) is the premier global community solely dedicated to sustainability not only through education, but also by spearheading research, policy and standards for the meetings and event industry. Source: [www.greenmeetings](http://www.greenmeetings.com)
- The Green Restaurant Association’s mission is to create an environmentally sustainable restaurant industry by working to provide convenient and cost-effective tools to help the restaurant industry reduce any harmful impacts on the environment. Source: www.dinegreen.com